It is not administratively possible for workers to continue in their jobs beyond the age of superannuation.

FCI Storage Losses

144. SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether scientific storare space available with the Central Warehousing Corporation is lying unutilised to the extent of 15 per cent, as reported in the Indian Express dated April 29, 1996 under the heading "FCI Storage Losses runs into crores";

(b) if so, the reasons therefore;

(c) whether Food Corporation of India is storing vast quantities of foodgrains in the open resulting in the storage losses running into crores of rupees;

(d) whether poor storage management such as inadequate prophylactic treatment has also resulted in the deterioration in foodgrains; and

(e) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken to minimise the storage losses of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The average occupancy of Central Warehousing Corporation's godowns is about 83% which is above the optimum level of 80%.

(c) In order to meet urgent additional requirements of storage space for procurement of foodgrains, the Food Corporation of India stores some quantity of foodgrains in Covered and Plinth (CAP) storage also under strict supervision and scientific management. Due to the vast magnitude of FCI's operations, some storage losses are unavoidable.

(d) Foodgrains are stored on scientific lines and pest control measures are undertaken regularly. However, due to operational difficulties including closure of depots due to labour unrest, there is at times a shortfall in prophylactic/curative treatment. However, FCI has not reported any deterioation of foodgrains due to inadequate prophylactic treatment.

(e) Some of the improtant measures taken to prevent/minimise the storage losses are as under:

(i) Strict enforcement of specifications during procurement;

(ii) Strict quality control measures during storage.

(iii) Augmentation of covered storage capacity;

(iv) Encouraging machine stitching of bags;

(v) reduction in the quantum of foodgrains filled in each bag; and

(vi) Administrative measures such as tightening of security at depot, intensifying surprise checks, ensuring regular stock verification etc.

Industrialisation of backward districts

145. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the assistance/grants provided by Government to the backward districts of the country during the last three years; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government with regard to rapid industrialisation of the backward districts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) After the liberalisation of the industrial policy, industrialisation is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. Most of the State Governments have been operating various schemes for development of their own backward areas/districts. Government of India supplements their efforts to the extent possible. The details of the various Schemes being operated by the Ministry of Indus-